

House Resolution

No. 51

Introduced by Assembly Member V. Manuel Pérez

August 4, 2014

House Resolution No. 51—Relative to immigration.

1 WHEREAS, Inscribed on our nation’s Statue of Liberty are the
2 words, “Give me your tired, your poor, Your huddled masses
3 yearning to breathe free, The wretched refuse of your teeming
4 shore. Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me, I lift my lamp
5 beside the golden door!”; and

6 WHEREAS, The number of unaccompanied Central American
7 children fleeing violence and entering the United States has resulted
8 in 52,000 apprehensions by United States Immigration and
9 Customs Enforcement, with a projected total of 90,000
10 apprehensions of unaccompanied minors expected by the end of
11 September 2014; and

12 WHEREAS, Approximately 28 percent of the children detained
13 this year have been from Honduras, 24 percent from Guatemala,
14 and 21 percent from El Salvador, countries whose respective
15 murder rates are among the top six highest murder rates in the
16 world; and

17 ~~WHEREAS, The violence in Honduras that is driving~~
18 ~~unaccompanied minors to migrate to the United States can be~~
19 ~~traced back to the 2009 military coup d’état, and subsequent~~
20 ~~election of Porfirio Lobo, which the United States immediately~~
21 ~~recognized despite the fact that Mr. Lobo’s administration retained~~
22 ~~most of the military figures who perpetrated the illegal coup; and~~

1 ~~WHEREAS, State-sponsored repression accelerated during the~~
2 ~~coup and subsequent Lobo Administration, including the use of~~
3 ~~death squads, the disappearance of opposition leaders, and the~~
4 ~~killing of innocent civilians and journalists; and~~

5 ~~WHEREAS, The United States has maintained, and in some~~
6 ~~areas increased, military and police financing to Honduras, despite~~
7 ~~compelling evidence linking the Lobo Administration to rampant~~
8 ~~corruption and human rights abuses; and~~

9 ~~WHEREAS, The Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant~~
10 ~~Responsibility Act of 1996 expanded the grounds for deportation,~~
11 ~~resulting in the deportation of 20,000 young immigrants to Central~~
12 ~~America between 2000 and 2004, inclusive. By 2010, over 125,000~~
13 ~~immigrants had been deported, with 90 percent sent to Honduras,~~
14 ~~Guatemala, and El Salvador; and~~

15 ~~WHEREAS, Many of those deported had come to the United~~
16 ~~States as young children, had become native English speakers, and~~
17 ~~had no recollection of their home countries, often lacking~~
18 ~~proficiency in the native language and customs of their home~~
19 ~~countries; and~~

20 ~~WHEREAS, Taking advantage of the decades of civil war and~~
21 ~~unrest in Central America, and lacking the cultural competency to~~
22 ~~earn an honest living, many of those deported fell back into the~~
23 ~~gang lifestyle they had learned in the United States and began~~
24 ~~initiating new members to what had historically been~~
25 ~~American-based street gangs; and~~

26 ~~WHEREAS, The Central American gangs that resulted from~~
27 ~~the deportation policies of the United States have resulted in~~
28 ~~rampant violence across Central America, but most notably in~~
29 ~~Honduras, Guatemala, and El Salvador, and includes homicides,~~
30 ~~kidnappings, human trafficking, extortions, and smuggling of~~
31 ~~drugs, automobiles, and weapons; and~~

32 ~~WHEREAS, The prevalence of gang violence, sexual assault,~~
33 ~~political corruption, as well as poverty in Central American~~
34 ~~countries has prompted unaccompanied minors to leave their home~~
35 ~~countries and immigrate to the United States; and~~

36 ~~WHEREAS, The President of El Salvador and Minister of~~
37 ~~Foreign Relations of Guatemala acknowledge that pull factors,~~
38 ~~such as family reunification, economic opportunity, and improved~~
39 ~~quality of life are driving unaccompanied minors to immigrate to~~
40 ~~the United States; and~~

1 WHEREAS, The Office of the United Nations High
2 Commissioner for Refugees urges the United States to grant
3 refugee status to Central American children who have crossed the
4 border, estimating that 60 percent of the children who have fled
5 into the United States have been forcibly displaced, qualifying
6 them for asylum under international law; and

7 *WHEREAS, In accordance with the William Wilberforce*
8 *Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act of 2008, the*
9 *United States must ensure that these unaccompanied children have*
10 *access to due process, lawyers, a judge, and justice; and*

11 WHEREAS, Central American governments take full
12 responsibility for the flow of unaccompanied children to the United
13 States, recognizing that their respective countries could and should
14 do more to mitigate the push factors driving so many children to
15 flee to the United States, including lack of economic development
16 opportunities, rampant poverty, and political corruption; and

17 WHEREAS, Central American countries acknowledge their
18 responsibility to ensure successful integration for the
19 unaccompanied children who are repatriated back home; and

20 ~~WHEREAS, The actions and rhetoric of some Californians who~~
21 ~~have blocked access to federal immigration buses transporting~~
22 ~~detained minors to federal immigration facilities demonstrates the~~
23 ~~need to educate the public about the role of American foreign~~
24 ~~policy has had in creating the instability that is driving so many~~
25 ~~young people to leave their homelands, in the belief that increased~~
26 ~~understanding will lead to greater compassion and responsibility~~
27 ~~towards these vulnerable individuals caught up in a situation not~~
28 ~~of their making; and~~

29 ~~WHEREAS, The Assembly acknowledges the role of United~~
30 ~~States foreign and domestic policy in destabilizing Central America~~
31 ~~and driving unaccompanied minors to emigrate from their~~
32 ~~homeland and recognizes that the formulation of stronger~~
33 ~~partnerships between Central American countries, California, and~~
34 ~~the United States as a whole are necessary in order to foster~~
35 ~~economic development in sending countries to curtail mass~~
36 ~~migration and improve public safety, tourism, and education; now,~~
37 ~~therefore, be it~~

38 *WHEREAS, Central American countries are working toward*
39 *improving their socioeconomic conditions by implementing*
40 *measures that will, over time, help improve the quality of life of*

1 *their people and curtail mass immigration. These measures include*
2 *increased access to education by implementing longer school days,*
3 *access to school uniforms and lunch programs for children, health*
4 *clinics, and grants and loans to farmers to develop the agricultural*
5 *economy; and*

6 *WHEREAS, The Assembly supports both state and federal efforts*
7 *to formulate strong partnerships with Central American countries*
8 *to promote economic development, education, and the rule of law*
9 *as a means to improve, stabilize, and democratize their institutions,*
10 *which will in turn help promote public safety and curtail mass*
11 *immigration; now, therefore, be it*

12 *Resolved by the Assembly of the State of California, That the*
13 *Assembly declares that ~~the residents of California,~~ all Californians,*
14 *as residents of the United States, have a ~~duty~~ civic responsibility*
15 *to respect the human dignity of ~~those~~ immigrants seeking refuge*
16 *in the United States and to ensure ~~they~~ that those immigrants are*
17 *afforded due process and equal protection under the laws of the*
18 *United States, including safe and unobstructed passage to federal*
19 *immigration processing facilities, medical care, and education, as*
20 *well as access to a mode of communication ~~that can help~~ to*
21 *facilitate their repatriation back to Central America when doing*
22 *so does not endanger their lives and safety; and be it further*

23 *Resolved, That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly transmit copies*
24 *of this resolution to the Governor, the Superintendent of Public*
25 *Instruction, the State Library, and the California State Archives.*